

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A data nullification device for nullifying target data recorded on a recording medium, the target data being made up of a plurality of data blocks, the data nullification device comprising:

a judging unit operable to judge, for each data block recorded on the recording medium, whether the data block needs to be nullified;

a receiving unit operable to receive continuously transmitted data from an external device, and set received data as a new data block; and

a nullifying unit operable to, when a predetermined number of data blocks are judged as needing to be nullified or when one or more data blocks whose total amount of data reaches a predetermined amount are judged as needing to be nullified, write the new data block to a recording area, on the recording medium, that stores a data block which is judged as needing to be nullified, to thereby nullify at least a part of the recorded data block which is judged as needing to be nullified and at the same time record the new data block.

2. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 1,
wherein the recording medium stores sequence information that shows a sequence in which the plurality of data blocks were recorded onto the recording medium, and

wherein said judging unit judges, in succession, the plurality of data blocks in the sequence shown by the sequence information, as needing to be nullified.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 1,
wherein each data block has a length corresponding to a fixed transmission time period,
and
wherein a specified number of recording areas which are each used as a recording area of
a data block are reserved on the recording medium.

5. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 4,
wherein if the length corresponding to the fixed transmission time period is variable and
if part of the recorded data block remains even after the new data block is written, said nullifying
unit further writes arbitrary data over the part of the recorded data block.

6. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 4,
wherein if there is not a new data block which is to be recorded, said nullifying unit
writes arbitrary data to the recording area.

7. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 2, further comprising:
a utilizing unit operable to utilize the target data recorded on the recording medium, in
units of data blocks,
wherein said judging unit further judges that each data block which was utilized by said
utilizing unit needs to be nullified.

8. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 7,

wherein the target data is content data which is transmitted from an external device and recorded on the recording medium,

wherein the content data is accompanied with copy control information showing whether copying of the content data is permitted or prohibited,

wherein said utilizing unit reproduces the content data recorded on the recording medium, in units of data blocks, and

wherein, only if the copy control information accompanying the content data shows that the copying of the content data is prohibited, said judging unit judges that each data block which was reproduced by said utilizing unit needs to be nullified.

9. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 1,

wherein the recording medium stores time limit information showing a recording time limit of each data block recorded on the recording medium, the recording time limit being a time limit after which retention of the data block on the recording medium is prohibited,

wherein said judging unit judges that each data block whose recording time limit is reached needs to be nullified, based on the time limit information, and

wherein, whenever any data block is judged as needing to be nullified because a recording time limit of the data block is reached, said nullifying unit nullifies the data block irrespective of whether the predetermined number of data blocks are judged as needing to be nullified or whether one or more data blocks whose total amount of data reaches the predetermined amount are judged as needing to be nullified.

10. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 9, further comprising:
a utilizing unit operable to utilize the target data recorded on the recording medium, in
units of data blocks,
wherein said judging unit further judges that each data block which was utilized by the
utilizing unit needs to be nullified.

11. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 10,
wherein the target data is content data which is transmitted from an external device and
recorded on the recording medium,
wherein the content data is accompanied with copy control information showing whether
copying of the content data is permitted or prohibited,
wherein said utilizing unit reproduces the content data recorded on the recording medium,
in units of data blocks, and
wherein, only if the copy control information accompanying the content data shows that
the copying of the content data is prohibited, said judging unit judges that each data block which
was reproduced by the utilizing unit needs to be nullified.

12. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 1, further comprising:
a utilizing unit operable to utilize the target data recorded on the recording medium, in
units of data blocks,
wherein said judging unit judges that each data block which was utilized by the utilizing
unit needs to be nullified.

13. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 12,
wherein the target data is content data which is transmitted from an external device and
recorded on the recording medium,
wherein the content data is accompanied with copy control information showing whether
copying of the content data is permitted or prohibited,
wherein said utilizing unit reproduces the content data recorded on the recording medium,
in units of data blocks, and
wherein, only if the copy control information accompanying the content data shows that
the copying of the content data is prohibited, said judging unit judges that each data block which
was reproduced by the utilizing unit needs to be nullified.

14. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 12,
wherein the target data is accompanied with copy control information showing whether
copying of the target data is permitted or prohibited,
wherein said utilizing unit records the target data recorded on the recording medium, to
another recording medium, in units of data blocks, and
wherein, only if the copy control information accompanying the target data shows that the
copying of the target data is prohibited, said judging unit judges that each data block on the
recording medium which was recorded by the utilizing unit needs to be nullified.

15. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 1,
wherein said nullifying unit destroys all parts of a data block which is judged as needing

to be nullified.

16. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 1,
wherein said nullifying unit destroys at least a part of a data block which is judged as
needing to be nullified, the part of the data block being necessary to utilize remaining parts of the
data block.

17. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 16,
wherein the target data is MPEG data including I pictures, and
wherein the part of the data block necessary to utilize the remaining parts of the data
block is an I picture.

18. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 16,
wherein the target data is MPEG data including I pictures, and
wherein the part of the data block necessary to utilize the remaining parts of the data
block is a first sector of an I picture.

19. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 16,
wherein when said data nullification device does not have a processing capacity sufficient
to destroy all parts of the data block, said nullifying unit destroys only the part of the data block
necessary to utilize the remaining parts of the data block.

20. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 19,
wherein said nullifying unit destroys the remaining parts of the data block within a range
where a processing capacity of said data nullification device allows.

21. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 19, further
comprising:

a destroying unit operable to destroy remaining parts of data blocks which were not
destroyed by said nullifying unit, when the data nullification device has a processing capacity
sufficient to destroy remaining parts of data blocks which were not destroyed by said nullifying
unit.

22. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 1,
wherein each data block recorded on the recording medium has been encrypted using an
individual encryption key,

wherein a decryption key for decrypting the encrypted data block is stored on the
recording medium, and

wherein said nullifying unit destroys at least a decryption key corresponding to a data
block which is judged as needing to be nullified.

23. (Original) The data nullification device of Claim 22, further comprising:

an acquiring unit operable to acquire the target data in an encoded form;

a decoding unit operable to decode the encoded target data using a user key which has

been provided to authorized users in advance, to obtain the target data;

a key generating unit operable to generate an arbitrary encryption key and a decryption key corresponding to the encryption key, for each data block of the target data;

a data encrypting unit operable to encrypt the data block using the encryption key so that the encrypted data block can be decrypted using the corresponding decryption key;

a key encrypting unit operable to encrypt the decryption key using an identifier unique to the data nullification device; and

a recording unit operable to record the encrypted data block and the encrypted decryption key onto the recording medium.

24. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 23,

wherein at least said decoding unit, said key generating unit, said data encrypting unit, and said key encrypting unit are contained in a single semiconductor chip.

25. (Currently Amended) A data nullification program embodied on a computer readable medium for nullifying target data recorded on a recording medium, the target data being made up of a plurality of data blocks, the data nullification program causing a computer to execute ~~the steps of~~ a method comprising:

judging, for each data block recorded on the recording medium, whether the data block needs to be nullified;

receiving continuously transmitted data from an external device, and setting the received data as a new data block; and

writing, when a predetermined number of data blocks are judged as needing to be nullified or when one or more data blocks whose total amount of data reaches a predetermined amount are judged as needing to be nullified, the new data block to a recording area, on the recording medium, that stores a data block which is judged as needing to be nullified, to thereby nullify at least a part of the recorded data block which is judged as needing to be nullified and at the same time record the new data block.

26. (Currently Amended) The data nullification program of Claim 25,
wherein the recording medium stores sequence information that shows a sequence in which the plurality of data blocks were recorded onto the recording medium, and
wherein the judging ~~step~~ judges, in succession, the plurality of data blocks in the sequence shown by the sequence information, as needing to be nullified.

27. (Canceled)

28. (Currently Amended) The data nullification program of Claim 26, wherein the method executed by further causing the computer to execute the step of further comprises:
utilizing the target data recorded on the recording medium, in units of data blocks,
wherein the judging ~~step~~ further judges that each data block which was utilized in the utilizing ~~step~~ needs to be nullified.

29. (Currently Amended) The data nullification program of Claim 25,

wherein the recording medium stores time limit information showing a recording time limit of each data block recorded on the recording medium, the recording time limit being a time limit after which retention of the data block on the recording medium is prohibited,

wherein the judging **step** judges that each data block whose recording time limit is reached needs to be nullified, based on the time limit information, and

wherein, whenever any data block is judged as needing to be nullified because a recording time limit of the data block is reached, the nullifying **step** nullifies the data block irrespective of whether the predetermined number of data blocks are judged as needing to be nullified or whether one or more data blocks whose total amount of data reaches the predetermined amount are judged as needing to be nullified.

30. (Currently Amended) The data nullification program of Claim 29, wherein the method executed by further causing the computer to execute the step of further comprises:

utilizing the target data recorded on the recording medium, in units of data blocks,

wherein the judging **step** further judges that each data block which was utilized in the utilizing **step** needs to be nullified.

31. (Currently Amended) The data nullification program of Claim 25, wherein the method executed by further causing the computer to execute the step of further comprises:

utilizing the target data recorded on the recording medium, in units of data blocks,

wherein the judging **step** judges that each data block which was utilized in the utilizing **step** needs to be nullified.

32. (Currently Amended) The data nullification program of Claim 25,
wherein the nullifying ~~step~~ destroys all parts of a data block which is judged as needing to
be nullified.

33. (Currently Amended) The data nullification program of Claim 25,
wherein the nullifying ~~step~~ destroys at least a part of a data block which is judged as
needing to be nullified, the part of the data block being necessary to utilize remaining parts of the
data block.

34. (Currently Amended) The data nullification program of Claim 25,
wherein each data block recorded on the recording medium has been encrypted using an
individual encryption key,
wherein a decryption key for decrypting the encrypted data block is stored on the
recording medium, and
wherein the nullifying ~~step~~ destroys at least a decryption key corresponding to a data
block which is judged as needing to be nullified.

35. (Currently Amended) A data nullification method for nullifying target data recorded
on a recording medium, the target data being made up of a plurality of data blocks, the data
nullification method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

judging, for each data block recorded on the recording medium, whether the data block
needs to be nullified;

receiving continuously transmitted data from an external device, and setting the received data as a new data block; and

writing, when a predetermined number of data blocks are judged as needing to be nullified or when one or more data blocks whose total amount of data reaches a predetermined amount are judged as needing to be nullified, the new data block to a recording area, on the recording medium, that stores a data block which is judged as needing to be nullified, to thereby nullify at least a part of the recorded data block which is judged as needing to be nullified and at the same time record the new data block.

36. (Currently Amended) The data nullification method of Claim 35,

wherein the recording medium stores sequence information that shows a sequence in which the plurality of data blocks were recorded onto the recording medium, and

wherein the judging ~~step~~ judges, in succession, the plurality of data blocks in the sequence shown by the sequence information, as needing to be nullified.

37. (Canceled)

38. (Currently Amended) The data nullification method of Claim 36, further comprising ~~the step of~~:

utilizing the target data recorded on the recording medium, in units of data blocks,

wherein the judging ~~step~~ further judges that each data block which was utilized in the utilizing ~~step~~ needs to be nullified.

39. (Currently Amended) The data nullification method of Claim 35,

wherein the recording medium stores time limit information showing a recording time limit of each data block recorded on the recording medium, the recording time limit being a time limit after which retention of the data block on the recording medium is prohibited,

wherein the judging ~~step~~ judges that each data block whose recording time limit is reached needs to be nullified, based on the time limit information, and

wherein, whenever any data block is judged as needing to be nullified because a recording time limit of the data block is reached, the nullifying ~~step~~ nullifies the data block irrespective of whether the predetermined number of data blocks are judged as needing to be nullified or whether one or more data blocks whose total amount of data reaches the predetermined amount are judged as needing to be nullified.

40. (Currently Amended) The data nullification method of Claim 39, further comprising ~~the step of~~:

utilizing the target data recorded on the recording medium, in units of data blocks,

wherein the judging ~~step~~ further judges that each data block which was utilized in the utilizing ~~step~~ needs to be nullified.

41. (Currently Amended) The data nullification method of Claim 35, further comprising ~~the step of~~:

utilizing the target data recorded on the recording medium, in units of data blocks,

wherein the judging ~~step~~ judges that each data block which was utilized in the utilizing

step needs to be nullified.

42. (Currently Amended) The data nullification method of Claim 35,
wherein the nullifying step destroys all parts of a data block which is judged as needing to
be nullified.

43. (Currently Amended) The data nullification method of Claim 35,
wherein the nullifying step destroys at least a part of a data block which is judged as
needing to be nullified, the part of the data block being necessary to utilize remaining parts of the
data block.

44. (Currently Amended) The data nullification method of Claim 35,
wherein each data block recorded on the recording medium has been encrypted using an
individual encryption key,
wherein a decryption key for decrypting the encrypted data block is stored on the
recording medium, and
wherein the nullifying step destroys at least a decryption key corresponding to a data
block which is judged as needing to be nullified.